

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 OIC-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02  
SS-15 ICA-11 TRSE-00 HA-05 EB-08 COME-00 OES-09  
CEQ-01 DOE-15 SOE-02 /119 W  
-----094025 191535Z /41

R 191420Z JUL 78  
FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7530  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN  
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 1652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SHUM, SF  
SUBJ: THE GRAHAMSTOWN INTERNATIONAL FUTURES CONFERENCE:  
SOUTH AFRICANS LOOK DOWN THE ROAD AHEAD

REF: JOHANNESBURG 1669

SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE REVIEWS AND ASSESSES THE RECENTLY  
CONCLUDED ROAD AHEAD-INTERNATIONAL FUTURES CONFERENCE AT  
GRAHAMSTOWN. THE CONFERENCE FEATURED LIVELY CRITICISM OF  
SAG RACIAL POLICY, AND WITNESSED A FURTHER STEP TOWARD  
POLITICAL CENTER-STAGE BY CHIEF GATSHA BUTHELEZI. BLACK  
PARTICIPANT REACTION TO THE CONFERENCE ILLUSTRATES ONCE  
AGAIN THE DIFFICULTY OF CARRYING ON MEANINGFUL INTER-  
RACIAL DIALOGUE. END SUMMARY

1. RHODES UNIVERSITY IN GRAHAMSTOWN WAS THE VENUE JULY 3  
TO 7 FOR A MUCH-PUBLICIZED CONFERENCE ON THE THEME, "THE  
ROAD AHEAD." SPONSORED BY THE 1820 SETTLERS NATIONAL MONUMENT  
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FOUNDATION, THE CONFERENCE PROCLAIMED AS ITS OBJECTIVE  
THE EXAMINATION, IN A MULTIDISCIPLINARY FORMAT, OF THE  
MAJOR CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS FACING SOUTH AFRICA OVER  
THE NEXT FEW DECADES. APPROXIMATELY 80 PAPERS WERE PRESENTED  
BY BLACK AND WHITE SOUTH AFRICAN ACADEMICIANS,  
EDUCATORS, AND BUSINESSMEN. SEVERAL DOZEN FOREIGN EXPERTS  
ALSO SPOKE (MAJOR PAPERS WILL BE POUCHED TO ACTION ADDEES,

WHEN AVAILABLE).

2. SOUTH AFRICA'S POLITICAL FUTURE QUICKLY EMERGED AS THE MAJOR AREA OF PARTICIPANT AND PRESS INTEREST AT THE CONFERENCE, WITH HIGH-QUALITY PRESENTATIONS ON OTHER SUBJECTS (NATURAL RESOURCES, EDUCATION, ECONOMICS) VIRTUALLY IGNORED. SUBSTANTIAL BODY OF BLACK PARTICIPANTS, AND CATALYTIC PRESENCE OF CHIEF GATSHA BUTHELEZI, ASSURED A NOTABLY FRANK DISCUSSION OF SOUTH AFRICAN RACE RELATIONS. PARTICIPANTS FROM CAPE TOWN AND STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITIES FELT CONFERENCE WAS PARTICULARLY SUCCESSFUL IN DEALING WITH REAL PROBLEMS WITHOUT PULLING PUNCHES.

3. SEVERAL SPEAKERS VOICED PARTICULARLY ELOQUENT WARNINGS OF THE DANGERS OF EXISTING SAG RACIAL POLICY. BISHOP MANAS BUTHELEZI TOLD THE CONFERENCE BLUNTLY THAT WHITES WERE BUILDING A HERITAGE OF HATE AMONG YOUNG BLACKS. HE ASKED: "HOW CAN THOSE WHO MEET ONLY DURING ADVERSE MOMENTS LIKE ARREST AND PROSECUTION DEVELOP A LOVE RELATIONSHIP?" PROFESSOR ANDRE DU TOIT OF STELLENBOSCH SAID THAT SAG ACTION AGAINST THE BCM LAST OCTOBER HAD DEALT A GREAT BLOW TO PROSPECT OF ACCOMMODATION BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE. HE TOLD DELEGATES: "FOR BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS ONCE AGAIN TO BECOME A LEGITIMATE AND PUBLIC MOVEMENT, THE OVERTHROW OF THE PRESENT POLITICAL ORDER IS NOW REQUIRED..."

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4. PROFESSOR GUY BUTLER OF RHODES UNIVERSITY SET THE CAT AMONG THE PIGEONS BY CONTENDING THAT ENGLISH-SPEAKING SOUTH AFRICANS WERE BECOMING INCREASINGLY RESENTFUL OF AFRIKANERS, WHOM THEY REGARD AS RESPONSIBLE FOR RACE LAWS. AFRIKANERS, SAID BUTLER, ARE INCREASINGLY REFERRED TO WITH CONTEMPT BY ALL AGE GROUPS OF ENGLISH SPEAKERS.

5. BY FAR THE MOST SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL EVENT OF THE CONFERENCE WAS, HOWEVER, CHIEF BUTHELEZI'S SPEECH. BY DEFAULT, BUTHELEZI WAS THE ONLY MAJOR SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICIAN ATTENDING CONFERENCE, AND HE MADE MAXIMUM USE OF THE OPPORTUNITY. HIS REMARKS RECEIVED WIDE PRESS COVERAGE (SEE REFTEL). CONSERVATIVE AUDITORS TENDED TO HEAR SPEECH AS A PERSONAL AND INTEMPERATE ATTACK ON PRIME MINISTER VORSTER. MORE VERLIGTE PARTICIPANTS VIEWED BUTHELEZI REMARKS AS A REASONED CASE FOR A DIFFERENT TYPE OF DIALOGUE.

6. IN ESSENCE, BUTHELEZI MADE TWO KEY POINTS. FIRST, HE WAS DEEPLY SKEPTICAL OF THE POSSIBILITY OF PEACEFUL CHANGE

(SUGGESTING MOREOVER THAT THE SAG HAD WRITTEN OFF THE POSSIBILITY, AND WAS THEREFORE PREPARING FOR THE WORST). SECOND, THE CHIEF DIRECTLY CONTRASTED HIS OWN POSITION AS BLACK LEADER WITH VORSTER'S ROLE AS LEADER OF THE WHITES: "WE ARE, HE AND I, THE TWO INDIVIDUALS IN THIS COUNTRY MOST INTIMATELY ENGAGED IN THE NATIONAL POLITICAL BATTLE."

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7. SOME PARTICIPANTS FELT BUTHELEZI'S SPEECH LACKED HIS USUAL PERSUASIVE STYLE. HE READ IT QUICKLY, IN A MONOTONE, AS IF THE VENUE WERE INSIGNIFICANT AND THE IMPORTANT THING WAS TO PUT HIS VIEWS ON THE RECORD. WHETHER OR NOT THE SPEECH WAS INDEED OFFERED AS A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO VORSTER, PARTICIPANTS FELT IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE SO PERCEIVED BY THE PRIME MINISTER. SPECULATION IS THAT BUTHELEZI WAS EMBOLDENED TO SPEAK OUT FORCEFULLY AT THIS TIME BY: 1) THE RECENT FREIBURG POLL SHOWING HIM TO BE BY FAR THE BEST KNOWN BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN LEADER, 2) THE SUCCESS AND STRENGTH OF THE INKATHA MOVEMENT TO DATE, AND 3) BUTHELEZI'S GROWING NEED AND DESIRE TO BE SEEN AND ACCEPTED AS A COURAGEOUS LEADER BY URBAN BLACKS.

8. SURPRISE ADDRESS BY BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA GAVE ADDED FILLIP TO CONFERENCE. SPEECH PROVED, HOWEVER, TO BE INCONSEQUENTIAL, SINCE THE BISHOP CAREFULLY AVOIDED EVEN

MILD CRITICISM OF SAG POLICIES, STRESSING INSTEAD THE  
NEED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. CONFERENCE  
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DID, HOWEVER, PROVIDE BUTHELEZI WITH OPPORTUNITY  
TO MEET AND TALK PRIVATELY WITH MUZOREWA. AFTER THIS  
MEETING, BUTHELEZI TOLD A "CAPE TIMES" REPORTER THAT,  
IN ADDITION TO RHODESIA, THE TWO MEN DISCUSSED THEIR  
RESPECTIVE PROBLEMS IN OBTAINING OAU RECOGNITION.

9. WIDESPREAD REGRET WAS VOICED BY WHITE AND  
BLACK PARTICIPANTS ALIKE AT VIRTUALLY TOTAL ABSENCE OF  
HIGH-LEVEL SAG OFFICIALS, WHO MIGHT HAVE BENEFITTED  
MOST FROM THE CONFERENCE. ALTHOUGH ALL MPS, CABINET  
MINISTERS, AND SENIOR GOVT OFFICIALS WERE INVITED,  
ONLY TWO MPS, BOTH PFP, ACCEPTED. SAG SECRETARY FOR  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, LOUIS FOCHE, ONLY SAG OFFICIAL  
TO ACCEPT INVITATION TO SPEAK, IN THE EVENT DELIVERED  
HIS HARD-LINE PAPER ON SQUATTER POLICY TO DELEGATES BY  
PROXY.

10. BLACK DELEGATES IN PARTICULAR CRITICIZED  
ABSENCE OF SAG OFFICIALS AS YET ANOTHER INDICATION OF  
GOVERNMENT'S UNWILLINGNESS TO RISK UNSTRUCTURED DIALOGUE  
WITH BLACK VOICES OF DISSENT: "THE GOVERNMENT WILL ONLY  
TALK TO BLACKS WHO KNOW HOW TO SAY YES." SOME BLACKS  
WERE ALSO CRITICAL OF THE CONFERENCE FORMAT, ARGUING THAT  
THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE HAD IMPLICITLY ACCEPTED THE CONCEPT  
OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT. AS CONSEQUENCE, THEY FELT  
THE CONFERENCE WAS INCORECTLY FOCUSSED ON EVOLUTION OF  
THE EXISTING SYSTEM, CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM, ETC. RATHER  
THAN DEALING WITH BLACKS' MAIN PRIORITY: LIBERATION.

11. CONCLUSION: AFRIKANER LEADERSHIP APPARENTLY FELT THAT  
CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY ENGLISH SPEAKERS WAS NOT FOR THEM.  
ABSENCE OF SAG OFFICIALS AT GRAHAMSTOWN MEANT THAT  
NET IMPACT OF CONFERENCE WAS PROBABLY LITTLE DIFFERENT  
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FROM THAT OF PREVIOUS COLLOQUIA SPONSORED BY  
INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS AND OTHER LIBERAL GROUPS.  
ALTHOUGH SOME BLACK/WHITE DEBATE TOOK PLACE, AND CONFERENCE  
WAS BROADER BASED THAN MOST, IT WAS FOR MOST PART THE  
SAME STORY OF THE FAITHFUL PREACHING TO THE ALREADY CONVERTED.  
BLACKS IN PARTICULAR EXPRESSED STRONG SKEPTICISM  
ABOUT THE ULTIMATE VALUE OF THIS SORT OF LIMITED FORUM

FOR INTERRACIAL DIALOGUE.

AHLGREN

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## Message Attributes

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